

USDA signs a Memorandum of Understanding with Thurgood Marshall Scholarship Fund

USDA and the Thurgood Marshall Scholarship Fund (TMSF) entered into a Memorandum of Understanding. On October 23, 2006, Assistant Secretary Margo M. McKay presented the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to the TMSF Board of Directors on behalf of Secretary of Agriculture Mike Johanns. The purpose of the MOU is to establish a relationship between USDA and TMSF, and it reflects the commitment of the parties to enhance USDA's outreach efforts with Historically Black Colleges and Universities, students and graduates of these universities, and organizations with mutual interests; along with the opportunity for each to assist USDA with its mission and goals.

Through this MOU, USDA agencies, in partnership with TMSF, will:

- Enhance the global competitiveness of American agriculture;
- Support the sustainability of rural farms;
- Support increased economic opportunities and improve rural farm life in this country;
- Enhance the protection and safety of our food supply;
- Improve the nation's health and nutrition;
- Protect and enhance our natural resources and the environment; and
- Improve management initiatives.

On September 7, 2006, TMSF recognized USDA with its 2006 Community Leadership Award. The award was presented to Secretary Mike Johanns during TMSF's annual congressional reception at the Washington Press Club. Secretary Johanns was recognized for his contributions to diversity and education. At the reception, Secretary Johanns noted that USDA's National Scholars Program, a joint effort with the 1890 Land Grant Universities, awards scholarships to students who study agriculture, food or natural resources at one of the 18 participating schools. Since 1992, approximately 412 students at 1890 Land Grant Universities have benefited from these scholarships.